The MINISTER'S QUARTERLY

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Foreword

FOR the last year the Seminar on Worship, appointed by our Commission on Evangelism and the Devotional Life, has been working on a Minister's Service Book. At our last session, held the last week in August at Wolfeboro, N. H., the group completed an "Order of Morning Worship with Communion." We have asked THE MINISTER'S QUARTERLY to print this service in its entirety. We hope that many of our ministers will make use of it during the year. After you have tried it out in your own church we would welcome any comments or criticisms you care to make. Communications should be addressed to the secretary, Wallace W. Anderson, State Street Church, Portland, Maine. Your help in this matter will be of great assistance, for our main purpose is to present to our ministers a book that will contain services of worship which meet the needs of our Congregational-Christian churches.

You will note that this is an entire morning worship service built around the Communion. However, there will be three other Communion Services in our book. One is a briefer service designed to be used in connection with your usual morning service of worship; one is a Communion Service for youth; and the other is a Service for private Communion.

AN ORGAN PRELUDE

HYMN OF ADORATION OF CHRIST OR PROCESSIONAL*

THE CALL OF CHRIST

Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.

THE COMMUNION COLLECT

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Proper hymns are suggested at the end of this service (1).

A GENERAL CONFESSION

Almighty and most merciful Father; we have erred, and strayed from Thy ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against thy holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and we have done those things which we ought not to have done. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us. Spare thou those, O God, who confess their faults. Restore thou those who are penitent; according to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord. And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake; that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous and sober life, to the glory of thy holy Name. Amen.

THE ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Almighty God have mercy upon you, forgive you all your sins, and deliver you from all evil, comfort and strengthen you

in all goodness, and bring you to life everlasting. Amen.

A CALL TO PRAISE

Minister: O Lord, open thou our lips.

People: And our mouths shall show forth thy praise.

Minister: Praise ye the Lord.

People: The Lord's Name be praised.

THE GLORIA PATRI

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON (2)

ANTHEM OR HYMN

THE CALL TO PRAYER

Dearly beloved, as we draw near to celebrate the supper of our Lord, let us earnestly consider our great need of having our comfort and strength renewed in this our earthly pilgrimage and warfare; and especially how necessary it is that we come to the Lord's Table with thanksgiving, faith, repentance, love, and with hearts hungering and thirsting after him. Let us draw near to him who heareth prayer, remembering that he listeneth more to our hearts than to our words. May He grant in the holy quiet of this hour, that we find rest and refreshment unto our souls.

THE PRAYERS (3)

Almighty God, from whom cometh down every good and perfect gift, and who pourest out on all who desire it the spirit of grace and supplication: deliver us, when we draw nigh to Thee, from coldness of heart and wanderings of mind; that with steadfast thoughts and kindled affections we may worship Thee in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty and everlasting God, who hast built thy Church upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone; we pray thee to inspire the Church Universal with the spirit of truth, unity and concord. And grant that all who confess thy holy name may abide in the truth, and live in unity and godly love.

O Lord our Governor, whose glory is in all the world: we commend this and all nations to thy merciful care, that being guided by thy providence, we may dwell secure in thy peace. Grant to all in authority wisdom and strength to know and to do thy will. Fill them with the love of truth and righteousness; and make them ever mindful of their calling to serve their people in thy fear. Give grace, O heavenly Father, to all Christian ministers, that they may, both by their life and teaching, set forth thy true and living Word and rightly administer thy holy sacraments. And to all thy people give thy heavenly grace; and especially to this congregation here present, that with meek heart and due reverence they may hear and receive thy holy Word; truly serving thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life. And we beseech thee, of thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and save all those who are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity. And we bless thy holy Name for all thy servants departed this life in thy faith and fear; beseeching thee to give us grace to follow their good examples, that with them we may be partakers of thy heavenly kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty God, we offer and present unto thee ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a living sacrifice unto thee, humbly beseeching thee to accept our devotions, and to enable us henceforth to live no longer unto ourselves but unto him who died for us and rose again and liveth evermore. Amen.

Teach us, O God, not to seek so much to be consoled as to console, not so much to be understood as to understand, not so much to be loved as to love. Show us that it is in giving that we receive, in self-forgetting that we find, in dying that we wake to eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord of all power and might, who art the Author and Giver of all good things; graft in our hearts the love of thy Name, increase in us true religion, nourish us

with all goodness, and of thy great mercy keep us in the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O God, the Protector of all who trust in thee, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy; increase and multiply upon us thy mercy; that, thou being our Ruler and Guide, we may so pass through things temporal, that we finally lose not the things eternal. Grant this, O heavenly Father, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

OFFERTORY SENTENCES

Let us do this in remembrance of Christ, for inasmuch as we do good to one of the least of his brethren we do it unto him.

As we have opportunity let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

Freely ye have received, freely give.

THE OFFERING

THE DOXOLOGY

THE COMMUNION SERMON

THE COMMUNION HYMN

THE INVITATION

Ye that do truly and earnestly repent you of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbors, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in His holy ways; draw near with faith, and take the Supper of the Lord to your comfort.

Come to this sacred Table, not because you must, but because you may: come to testify not that you are righteous, but that you sincerely love our Lord Jesus Christ, and desire to be His true disciples: come, not because you are strong, but because you are weak; not because you have any claim on Heaven's rewards, but because in your frailty and sin you stand in constant need of Heaven's mercy and help: come to seek a Presence and pray for a Spirit.

And now that the Supper of the Lord is spread before you, lift up your minds and hearts above all selfish fears and cares; let this bread and this wine be to you the witnesses and signs of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit. Before the Throne of the Heavenly Father and the Cross of the Redeemer make your humble confession of sin, consecrate your lives to the Christian obedience and service, and pray for strength to do and to bear the holy and blessed will of God.

THE SURSUM CORDA AND THE SANCTUS (4)

Minister: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up unto the Lord.

Minister: Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

People: It is meet and right so to do.

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty that we should at all times and in all places give thanks unto Thee, O Holy Lord, Father Almighty, Everlasting God.

Therefore with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name, ever more praising thee and saying:

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts;

Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory:

Glory to be Thee, O Lord Most High. Amen.

THE PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

O Thou who hast consecrated for us a new and living Way, even Jesus Christ our Lord: Grant unto us who are here met so to partake of this bread and this cup that our hearts and lives may be truly yielded to the sway of his spirit. Now, as we commemorate his last supper with his disciples and his offering of himself in the sacrifice of the cross, we humbly beseech thee to grant thy Holy Spirit and to sanctify this bread and wine, which now we would consecrate to their sacred use; that they may become unto us symbols of the body that was broken and of

the blood that was shed for us. May they beget in us penitent hearts and quickened faith, and may we receive this holy Sacrament to our present and everlasting comfort. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE OFFERING OF THE BREAD

The Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

Ministering to you in his name I give this bread.

(Here the Bread shall be distributed to the people.)

THE OFFERING OF THE CUP

After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament (or new covenant) in my blood: This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

Ministering to you in His name I give you this cup.

(Here the cup shall be distributed to the people.)

A PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

We give thanks to thee, Almighty God, that thou hast refreshed us with this memorial of thy love and of thy great gift, even Jesus Christ; and we beseech thee to strengthen our faith in thee and to increase our love toward one another; through Him who is our Lord. Amen.

HYMN (5)

A PRAYER OF DEDICATION

O God, who art the Guide and Shepherd of all faithful souls, grant unto us who have now tasted of thy goodness, that the eyes of our spirit may never cease to see thee, nor our ears to hear thy voice; that we, constantly remembering thy love and goodness toward men, may give ourselves with pure heart and thoughtful mind to serve and follow thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE BENEDICTION

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be amongst you, and remain with you always. Amen.

AN ORGAN POSTLUDE

(1) Hymns:

"Love divine, all love excelling"
"Jesus, thou joy of loving hearts"
"Savior, who thy flock art feeding"
"Here, O my Lord, I see thee face to face"
"All Hail the power of Jesus' Name"

(2) Suggested readings will be found in the lectionary.

(3) Any of the following prayers or the minister's own may be used.

(4) After the word "Father Almighty, Everlasting God" the minister may, if he so desires, read the Preface proper to the season of the Christian year.

"Holy, Holy, Holy" may be sung by choir or the entire congregation.

(5) If a second offering is desired it should be taken during the singing of this hymn.

Don't Talk to Yourself!

The Rev. John R. Scotford
Editor "Advance"

IN private, talking to one's self is a harmless vagary; in public, it is a social sin. Yet many ministers do just that.

The listening ear is the sole test of the effectiveness of any public discourse. Not what is said, but what is heard, is the important matter. If one's dominant desire is to express himself, he should not hire a hall but invest in a typewriter and a pile of paper. The written word is both the cheapest and the least annoying outlet for the overflowing self. Nobody cares how long an earnest soul labors with his own thoughts, provided that he does it in private. The arrival of an audience alters the situation. If people are present, they must be the center of attention.

The man who talks to himself is more concerned with his own thoughts than with the impression which his words are making upon his listeners. This attitude involves a subtle discourtesy to the audience. It also betrays the speaker into self-deception. He assumes that what he is saying is penetrating into the minds of those in front of him, which is not the case.

Several circumstances betray the man who is talking to himself.

When a speaker is not easily heard, the fault may be with the accoustics of the room, but it is more likely to lie in the psychology of the man himself. When we are conversing with an individual we soon discover if he is getting our words, and then adjust ourselves accordingly. The same principle holds when the listeners are multiplied. A speaker of any experience can tell by the expression on the faces of the people in front of him if his voice is carrying. He will lower or raise his tone or diminish his speed of utterance until he is sure that he is getting across. He does this by concentrating his attention on his listeners. On the other hand, the man who talks but is not heard is primarily concerned with what he is saying rather than with his audience. If he were not oblivious to the situation, he would do something about it. To a considerable degree this applies to those who speak with an accent. An Englishman or a Scotchman who has something to say will make himself understood. An incomprehensible manner of speech is usually accompanied by an incomprehensible manner of thought. Such speakers are merely talking to themselves.

The man who goes on and on after he has lost the attention of his listeners is in the same boat. Sometimes he is so wrapped up in what he is saying that he is oblivious to what has happened. Or he may feel that what he has to say is so important that he must carry on to the bitter end. Most pitiable of all is the simple soul who thinks that he can somehow register an impression by the multiplication of words. The fallacy in all these situations is the assumption that somehow the words will score, even though nobody pays any attention to them. On the other hand, the speaker who is really talking to the people in front of him will quickly detect any signs of inattention—and take action. He will either regain his audience, usually by introducing something dramatic, or else quit. He will not talk for long to people who are not listening.

Looking a bit deeper, many men fail to hold the attention of a congregation because what they have to say has little bearing on the lives, problems, and interests of the congregation in front of them. They live in one world, their people in another. This is a frequent problem with young preachers and with those

whose interests are bookish rather than practical. Their delivery may be good, but their sermons do not arrive. In bewilderment the people say, "He was too deep for me," while the truth is that he was talking to himself rather than to them.

Another variation of the same problem: the men whose vocabularies and sentence structure render them incomprehensible. Often they speak in an unknown tongue so far as their congregations are concerned. They are credited with a profundity which they do not possess. Rarely is the man who cannot make himself understood by ordinary mortals saying anything. He is often merely offering verbal incense before his own egotism.

The use of a manuscript may lead a preacher astray. It supplies a place where his eyes can rest without revealing to him the attitude of the congregation. By making possible an elegant use of words it tempts him to think of the sermon as a work of art rather than as a vehicle for conveying ideas to a congregation. It may be a barrier between him and the people —or it may not. It has the virtue of guaranteeing a definite terminal point.

We refuse to be impressed by strange accents, exotic vocabularies, tortuous English, or erudite discussions of remote matters. The business of a preacher is to tell us something in terms that a wayfaring man though a fool can comprehend. We have no qualms whatever about avoiding ministers who talk to themselves rather than to us. When we make a mistake, we may even walk out. Some say that this is bad manners, but our retort is that it is even worse conduct for some one to take our time and give us nothing in return. It can be argued that it is really courtesy to retire when a soliloquy is in progress. When Hamlet talks to himself, the stage is empty. Should not the same principle apply to preachers? Congregations are altogether too long-suffering. If it were the custom to tiptoe out when the minister is incomprehensible, we would get better sermons.

Many ministers talk to themselves at funerals. They are steeped in poetry and Scripture. They build a service around selections which to them, largely because of rich association, are most impressive. But many of the people who arrive at funerals are unacquainted with the Psalms and find Eddie Guest the most understandable of poets. The careful efforts of the minister go completely over their heads. The pastor of one of our largest churches recently remarked, "About all the mourners really hear are your personal references and a word of hope." A funeral should be adapted to the understanding and background of those who attend; else why have one?

Sometimes a speaker inherits an audience which has been completely stupefied by those who have preceded him on the program. It may be an honor to be last, but it is much easier to be first! However, this is a situation from which a wise speaker can derive more glory than he deserves. This is the time to use a rapid-fire approach with plenty of humor, to condense what needs to be said into about two mouthfuls, and then stop. You will be the speaker of the occasion, and your listeners will asume that what you left unsaid was even more remarkable than what you said.

Preachers can learn much from journalism. A good editor studies his publication from the angle of the ordinary reader. The founder of the New York *News* used to peer through the windows of subway and elevated trains to see what part of his paper the people were really reading. A more common practice is to simulate the approach of the average reader, turning the pages and asking the question, "What would John Jones of Clay Center, Kansas, think of this, and this, and this?" So young ministers might well go over their sermons with particular parishioners in mind; "Will Mrs. Jones understand all of the words? How will my argument square with the life experience of Howard Smith? What is there in this sermon for Betsy Williams?" and

so on. By such discipline a man can train himself not only to preach, which is a simple matter, but to preach to people, which is both more difficult and more rewarding.

Ultimately the successful public speaker develops several healthy instincts. He watches his listeners more than he does his notes. He detects the first evidences of inattention, and heeds them. His prepared words do not bind him. He adapts himself quickly to moods and circumstances.

The joy of public speech lies in talking to people. It is not our words, but their reactions, which are important. We affect them, but they affect us. If we will let them, an audience will always do something to a speaker. The real satisfaction of the whole business lies in the feeling of oneness which can develop between him who speaks and those who listen.

Restore the Circuit Rider

The Rev. W. Edgar Gregory

Executive Director, San Francisco Council of Churches

I GREW up in a small town in Colorado which had once boasted a Congregational Church. This church had disappeared about the time of my birth, however, and when I arrived there ten years later virtually all memory of it had perished. A few of the town's better citizens still cherished their membership and kept their names on the rolls of a Congregational Church in a city some miles away. They never participated in the activities of the two churches which came to dominate the religious life of the town—or of the fly-by-night sects which came in and momentarily established themselves.

My folks were "God fearing," though not church members. When I early became interested in Sunday School they gave me every encouragement possible and by the time I was in high school I was among the leaders of the young people's society of the church—at this time headed by a revivalist from Texas (with a fourth-grade education). For some reason he singled me out for special evangelistic efforts. I parried him for a while but finally exploded and withdrew from the church. It was not until my senior year in college that I re-established my church connections, joining the Congregational Church associated with the same college.

During the years since I have often pondered this problem. I know that there was a small but influential group in that home community which would have responded admirably to our Congregational leadership—but too weak a group to establish an organization of its own. Other communities across the country are probably faced with a similar problem. Not only this, but each of these communities must have young people growing up under much the same circumstances as I did. They would ultimately outgrow the local churches and there is nothing to which to turn.

We have followed the practice in recent years of encouraging our smaller and weaker churches to federate or unite with other churches nearby. In a sense we have solved our rural church problem when such unions or federations are accomplished, but are we not doing a disservice to many who have looked to us for leadership?

Any church union or federation comes to be run by the majority. Our Congregational-Christian people are seldom in a majority. Quite often they are the smaller, more intellectual portion of the community. Such church unions do not aid

them in the slightest. The usual consequence is that they are virtually left without a church home. Certainly they seldom feel at home in the highly charged, emotional atmosphere which the church comes to have in most of our smaller, semi-rural communities.

Other groups, such as the Quakers and Christian Scientists, who feel they have something distinctive to offer, never make such wasteful sacrifices of local members simply because of the smallness of the local groups. They maintain their membership even though it is so small as to justify only sporadic home meetings.

A suggested solution came to me the year I took over the work of one of our Indian Missions. We had several Indian lay preachers who conducted the services in their various communities. They were paid small salaries by the mission and expected to furnish Christian leadership within their communities. I found that actually I could get my message over much more effectively by spending a couple of hours weekly with each of these men, going over carefully the message I wanted to get across, and letting them deliver the message in their own language on Sunday morning. It was even better than for me to preach and let them translate. They digested the material I gave them, and made it their own, and transmitted it in digestible form to their fellow tribesmen.

I have observed that frequently our ministry is too technical and abstract for our rural parishes. A fully trained minister frequently fails to serve such communities as effectively as some almost illiterate evangelist who puts in an appearance. Might we not be wise in making use of the untapped sources of lay leadership in such communities?

We should not for a moment think of giving up the high educational standard we have established for our ministry, but if we could pool a half-dozen or dozen of our rural churches we would enable them to pay a salary which could command our best leadership. This leader could through constant contact and supervision serve areas now unserved. Purely ministerial functions could be reserved for him but the deacons could well supervise regular Sunday worship, discussing with him the topic for the sermon and furnishing him with material to illustrate and elaborate on it. Quite often his deacon can get his message over more effectively than he can.

With the modern supply of recorded music, too, to draw upon, church services could be enriched with the finest in our liturgical heritage.

There is also another possible aid which might assist in these services. Should the deacons not feel competent to preach the sermon it might be possible to secure recordings of some of the better sermons of our day and use them in the service, or get copies of such printed sermons and have them read.

Such a "circuit rider" would need all of the training we could possibly give him —training in administration, in the spiritual life, in scholarship, and in understanding human nature. He would have to be a man of outstanding character himself, for his duties would not permit the intimate acquaintances our rural pastorates now produce. (Parenthetically let me add that it would be very unwise to appoint lay preachers. No matter how fine they are, they are too close to the local situation to exercise leadership. Rotation of leadership among the deacons of the local church is much more effective and satisfactory.)

Of course, this restoration of the "circuit rider" need not detract from the growth of community and federated churches. Our people could be encouraged to participate in such local organizations but hold their own meetings under the leadership of our "circuit rider" at appropriate intervals. In this case, they would have not only the values of our own distinct fellowship in which they could equally participate, but the values of united community worship.

Balanced Preaching

Mrs. B. K. Neuman
Germantown, Philadelphia

THIS is a very amateurish article written by a woman, and, of course, from a woman's point of view.

It is written to our Preachers, God bless them, who, among other multitudinous duties, have to prepare and preach to us every Sunday morning. They have to get us ready to live and to die. To add to their difficulties they must have a word for every one who makes up their regular congregation. Many and various they are. The business man who is an executive and one who is doing a routine job. The mother who comes with zeal but who is leaving many cares behind her and is secretly thinking of plans for dinner and of the homeless people who should be invited as guests. Men just out of the service trying so hard to fit in somewhere and wondering how to do it. Students who feel very sure about life—boys and girls full of vitality and hope for the future. Little children who, perhaps, have been to Sunday School and now must sit through what is to them a long service. And last there are the old people who have lived their lives either poorly or well and are filled with memories bitter and sweet.

What a challenge, dear Preacher! What have you to say that will help the people in the pews? How well do you know them and their needs?

I hope you have not only risen from your knees, but that you have fought with your own mind for your people who need you. Perhaps you have just come from Grinnell reimpressed by the great cause of National and Foreign Missions. Or perhaps Social Action with its great claim on Christians has excited your soul. Or Race Relations has reared its head and you are terribly excited about it. Surely you must preach on one of these three. Moreover, you must preach on them not only one Sunday but fifty-two Sundays a year! Whatever happens you must make a dent on these people of yours! Your thoughts must be their thoughts—not their need your response.

And now may I in all humility make a few suggestions?

All through the war and thus far in the post-war years the women have been busy about many things. But wherever they have been in office, schoolroom or mill they have had one central thought—how to provide balanced meals for their families. They have carefully considered the various members of their households and have had all the food values in mind, appetizers, meat, fish, milk, vegetables and fruits and, last but not least, a dessert that would please them all—in short, the well-balanced meal that would nourish and renew their bodies, stimulate their brains and taste good. Of course this woman did not serve this meal each day but varied it as much as her time, ration points and pocketbook would allow.

How about it, dear Preacher? How about feeding us all, wise and ignorant, mentally alert and morally sluggish, young and old and—we like variety.

We do not want to hear about the depravity of the world all the time. We hear about it over the radio and through the press every day of the week and grow so sick of heart that we almost forget that there is a God. We want to be reassured. We want to hear about the men and women who are doing great and farreaching things. We want to know how our money, which we have sacrificed

to give, is being administered on the other side of the world. We want to hear stories of the heroism of Bible characters and equally strong modern people. We want sometimes to have the glories of nature spread before our eyes in the beauty of the Psalms and modern verse. We want to hear stories of simple people everywhere who are giving of their best to the world.

In fact, we want to be stimulated and helped and made sure of the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Will you help us, dear Preacher, and give us a more balanced diet?—and please don't forget the dessert.

Why Worship?

The Rev. Paul W. Yinger

Associate Minister Claremont Church, Claremont, Cal.

"Come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker." (Psalm 95.6)

EVERYTHING in life these days is put to the test of utility. We want to know of what use a thing is. Our almost habitual question in regard to anything is: "What is it for?" "What's its use?" We ask this about the things we buy, the clubs we join, the hobbies we pursue.

And religion is not free from the test of utility. In private thought and open discussion the question is constantly raised: "Of what use is religion?" In harmony with the general spirit of the age we have said that if religion is to be given a place in our thought it must be shown to us what returns can be expected. We want something of value. We want something useful. We want something practical.

Above all we ask, "Why Worship?" We quite readily admit that standards of morality and ethics are necessary. We must have rules by which to govern human associations. The necessity for honesty, fair play, and the golden rule is obvious. But, why worship?

The very question, Why worship?, indicates that the only true answer will be but vaguely understood; for the attitude which prompts our question obscures the meaning of the answer. There is only one answer to the question, "Is worship valuable?"—which is implied when we ask, "Why worship?" That answer is, Probably not—not valuable as we think of the word, for the primary consideration in true worship cannot be ourselves. Worship which is based upon utility is idolatry—the worship of self—for the end in view is self-exaltation rather than humility before God. True worship does not arise from a desire to find some one or something to foster our petty schemes or support our private standards. Worship is, quite simply, as the word readily suggests, the recognition of worth. It is not, as we have often supposed, paying a customary tribute to an unknown God. Worship is the recognition of the greatness, the magnificence, the supremacy of God. We feel and exclaim that "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein." (Psalm 24:1) It results in our voluntarily bending our knees and bowing our hearts to the Almighty. Spontaneously we say, "Come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our maker." (Psalm 95:6)

But still the question echoes back and forth across our stubborn minds: Why? Why kneel before God? Why worship

and bow down? And, again, at the very moment that question arises, an answer becomes impossible. When we ask for a reason for worship, the meaning of worship is gone.

Jesus clearly showed what true worship is when, speaking to the woman at Jacob's Well in the city of Sychar in Samaria, he said, "The true worshipper shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him." (John 4:23)

The real altar is within. It is an altar made light by the candle of God's love, and at it we kneel. Our kneeling is a willing response to the unceasing love of God—love responding to love.

Now, if it be true, as we believe it is, that worship should not be man-centered but God-centered, another question arises: "If we do not readily feel the presence and the power of God, why should we try to worship?"

Well, all of us are at least primer students of God. Into the barren schoolrooms of our souls some little shaft of the light of God's love has peeped through. There is not one of us who has not felt a shadowing humility in the contemplation of the Almighty, and we pause for a moment now and again to let the hovering shadow catch up with us; but the shadow stops when we stop, and we get no nearer to God.

Yet, our consciousness that God is hovering near us leads us in moments of despair at least to exclaim, "Oh that I knew where I might find Him!" (Job 23:3) Habitually we merely grope around, worshipping our pagan idols — satisfied that our little gods are true gods. Occasionally, however, we release, in our longing, this cry of Job: "Oh that I knew where I might find Him!"

Can we find him? "Canst thou by searching find out God?" (Job 11:7)

In answer to Job's thoughtful query we hear God's reply to the psalmist: "Be still and know that I am God." (Psalm 46:10) It is the ceaseless, breathless, noisy trying of our age which keeps God from discovering us. It is our furious attempt to recognize in ourselves and in our friends some real kinship to the divine which keeps us from seeing Him. We are so anxious to make ourselves like God, without knowing what God is like, that we usually end up by making God in our likeness. We cannot discover God. God discovers us. He lays hold on us.

In 1883 when Matthew Arnold visited America, he was about the only remaining great English author who had not come to recognize the literary power of Mark Twain. Arnold considered the American humorist as a mere buffoon, a comedian. One night at a reception given in the Englishman's honor, Matthew Arnold was suddenly startled by the appearance of a striking figure on the other side of the room. Arnold was shaking the hand of William Dean Howells at the time. Loosening his grip he exclaimed to Mr. Howells in astonishment, "Who in the world is that?" It was Mark Twain. Ever after that Matthew Arnold was a great admirer of the American author. He had seen him. He had been captured by him.

An analogy is always imperfect; but it may be suggestive. To many of us visitors to this world of men, God seems to be an illusion, unreal, unnecessary, unworthy. But one day we meet Him, and they we say with Job, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." (Job 42:5–6) This is the inevitable exclamation of one who has seen God. "Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes," for he who has held himself, or lesser gods, up as almighty, knows, when he sees God, that man is indeed a miserable creature. In the blinding, yet illuminating, light of God, the human is blotted out and the divine is made clear. We recognize then, in our shamefulness, that God "knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are dust." (Psalm 103:14)

Yet the temper of our modern life does not allow us to think of worship in

these terms. We are often quite incapable of understanding the spirit of John Calvin saying: "Nor can we really aspire toward Him, till we have begun to be displeased with ourselves." (*Institutes,* p. 47, vol. I)

We have lived for so many years in an attitude of man-worship that to think of turning our devotion to anything else seems, to say the least, unrealistic. We have wanted to think that aspiration toward God is about the same as the recognition of our own highest selves. It is a part of our perpetual human pride that we construct the divine in human terms and recognize the Everlasting only in relation to our temporal needs.

But life is in danger of ending in bitterness and cynicism for the person who seeks to find in himself alone the meaning of life.

Shakespeare, speaking through the character Cassius in the play "Julius Cæsar," makes one of his profound observations about life when Cassius says:

"I had as lief not be as live to be
In awe of such a thing as I myself."
(Act 1, sc. ii)

It is a disappointing idol—the idol of self—and we soon recognize, as Cassius did, that life is worth little if the chief object of our loyalty is ourself.

All of this leads us to what might be called the practical side of worship. It is true, we cannot give an answer to the question "Why Worship?" It is like asking: Why do you love music? Or what makes you think that scene is beautiful? Yet to the one who has been with God and felt His presence, a practical result is obvious. Life becomes richer, for why should it not with a supreme object of worship?

True worship is like the maturing of an adolescent, who has always enjoyed, he thinks, the terrific, noisy, disquieting popular music, and nothing else. But as his life begins to open up, something happens. He discovers that a symphony expresses more fully what he feels. The monotonous, unchanging beat of boogie-woogie seems a little insipid in comparison with the symphony, which expresses so many feelings and moods. For one learns that life is not simply excitement and gayety. There are other things to life. So popular music becomes, at best, a medium for expressing an occasional mood, and is not the full representation of life.

Our religious feelings grow and change. In the infantile mind the objects of worship and praise are things, phenomena, heroes, those who satisfy youthful desires. The center of ultimate loyalty is the individual, and the thing most worthy of consideration is self. But the growing and expanding individual, observing the world and feeling his own impotence and weakness, begins to wonder if perhaps there is not something greater than self to which one's supreme loyalty may be given. As Calvin put it, we cannot "really aspire toward Him, until we have begun to be displeased with ourselves."

It would be untrue to assume that individuals reach readily a place where the good of self is pushed into the background in the desire to serve God. Nor does forgetfulness of self mean the neglect of one's education or work or duties. It means the loss of the tendency toward self-exaltation, in view of the overshadowing greatness and constant goodness of the Eternal.

During the campaign in which Lincoln was elected President, Stanton referred to Lincoln as a low, cunning clown. The report of this remark, and others, reflecting Stanton's attitude toward the President, came to Lincoln. Instead of making Stanton's attitude a basis for ill will, however, Lincoln consistently refused to retaliate. Lincoln needed Stanton. He needed his support. Stanton was made Secretary of War. And at the coffin of the martyred President, it was Stanton who said, "There lies the greatest ruler of men the world has ever known." Lincoln's disregard of self and devotion to his great task and his nation's need were so genuine and constant that Stanton's

eyes were opened and *he* paid the tribute which has been echoed by millions since Lincoln's death.

So, the love of God is constant. But like careless and busy children we do not see His love. We do not recognize Him whose mercy and kindness are from everlasting to everlasting. Like children we are engaged with our toys and our mirrors —lost to the Father's love and care. And God, like a wise father, does not attempt to coerce our love; but continues to pour out His blessings; knowing that love alone can beget love.

So, let us not hope to find God by looking for a useful God. (He may be that.) But some day, like St. Paul who was laid hold upon by the God of Christ, we will be laid hold upon by the Eternal Father. We will not ask then, "How can we use God?" but, "How can God use us?" Then the desire for self-worship will be pushed into the background. We will say, "Come let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker."

L. P. J's. *locus ab quo*

The Rev. Max Strang
Dubuque, Iowa

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY, in *The Haunted Bookshop,* has described how irritating the mere presence of books can be; it is also exciting sometimes to read a book.

There is, for example, *Letters of John Ruskin to Charles Eliot Norton,* in which Ruskin relates a meeting of the London Metaphysical Society, in the first week of November, 1870. If, as has been claimed, Lyman Beecher sired more high-voltage brains than any other American, the London Metaphysical Society could claim, on indefeasible grounds, to be first among learned societies. Its membership contained Thomas Huxley, the Deans of Westminster and Canterbury, the Bishop of Worcester, the Master of Lincoln College, the Duke of Argyll, Archbishop Manning, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Ruskin, and, as Ruskin reports it, "Father Dal—something."

That ellipsis was the catnip. Who was "Father Dal—something?" Was the Duke of Argyll so vehement in his "logical antagonisms," and the society in such an uproar, that Ruskin forgot the latter part of the name? Was Huxley so pontifical in his conclusions on a frog's soul, and Ruskin so determined to change the frog to a toad, and to talk about optics instead of metaphysics, that he regarded a mere priest's name as of little consequence? Ruskin did characterize the conduct of this particular session of the society as "frivolous pugnacity"—a phrase which aptly describes many convocations less erudite than those of the London Metaphysical Society. Or, with that detached superiority for which some persons are noted, Ruskin among them, perhaps he did not regard his introduction to the man as of enough interest to warrant remembering the name. All such surmisings, however, were feckless; there was nothing else to be done, but to track "Father Dal—something" down.

The chase led through many "haunted bookshops." Some libraries. To not a few savants. It grew warmer in the pages of *The Confession of an Octogenarian.* It was ended by a postal card, which bears the palm for terseness, accuracy, and salesmanship. "The name you are seeking is I believe Father Dalgairns." Then, cannily, comes the commercial: "There are references to him in my *From Authority to Freedom*—the biography of Charles Hargrove, Williams & Norgate, 1921." And the signature, "L. P. Jacks."

Of course, such an ingenuous "plug" could not be unavailing—and another irritant soon stood on the bookshelf, and was frequently scored. What really was spine-tingling, however, was L. P. J.'s *locus ab quo*. A juxtaposition such as that penny postal bore is "out of this world"; but, there it stood, in unmistakable chirography—"Far Outlook, Oxford."

In what possible sense could Oxford—known to some as "the home of lost causes and impossible loyalties"—be associated with extension? If Robertson, of Brighton, who matriculated at Brazenose, can be believed, Oxford was temperamentally constricted. He writes, "There is something excessively chilling in the donnishness of Oxford, which insinuates its unlovely spirit everywhere—lecture, chapel, pulpit, Union, conversation, retirement—one feels inclined to say, 'Shall I ever love a human being again with anything warmer than a vegetable attachment?' It is just like the contents of my gigantic brown pitcher last winter—though within eighteen inches of the fire all day, one globe of ice." Was it not an Oxonian Pedant who spent a whole lifetime on the Greek enclitic *de?* And did not another don, from the "gray spires of Oxford," give forty years' labor to the *cum* clauses in Cicero? This devotion to the minuscule is commendable—at least as regards patience, persistence, and industry; but it hardly could be said to be conducive to "Far Outlook."

In an almost perfect example of understatement, George Fox gave solemn witness, "The Lord opened unto me that being bred at Oxford or Cambridge was not enough to fit and qualify men to be ministers of Christ"—a caution seminaries and seminarians would do well to remember. The damning comment of one who had escaped the constricting influences of Oxford pedagogues was: "They held in their lifeless hands the riches of their fathers, without inheriting the spirit which had created and improved that sacred patrimony. They read; they praised; they compiled; but their languid souls seemed alike incapable of thought and action. A succession of patient disciples became in their turn the dogmatic teachers of the next servile generation." Bliss Perry said almost the same thing once of a well-known New England college. Happily contrasted, at least in one respect, was that other school of which it was said: "I do not know of another college from which you can see so far in an unobstructed horizon." Were the intellectual horizons of its faculty as expansively unobstructed? L. P. J.'s. *locus ab quo* offers hope even for Oxford.

To be sure, locale is not limited by yards and leagues. The "dispericraniated" and stammering genius, at his desk in the den of the East India House, visited all shores washed by the tides of the soul. John Wesley, in a room with only one small window, opening against a solid brick wall, had the world for his parish. Carlyle reminds us that "Any road, this simple Entepfuhl road, will lead you to the end of the world." On July 30, 1819, with the modesty of genius and in the madness of laudanum, Coleridge compassed the cosmos, when he subscribed one of his writings, "A map of the road to Paradise, drawn in Purgatory, on the confines of Hell, by S. T. C." In *Our Town,* Thornton Wilder addresses a letter: "Jane Crofut; the Crofut Farm; Grover's Corners; Sutton County; New Hampshire; United States of America; Continent of North America; Western Hemisphere; the Earth; the Solar System; The Universe; The Mind of God." He runs a straight line from "Jane Crofut" to "The Mind of God." That's the peril and the glory of every "Jane Crofut."

Spaciousness isn't microscopic or telescopic. Of Charles Goodnight, builder of a domain in the Southwest, it was said: "He always rode beyond the borderlands." There was something about a boundary which challenged his soul to cross it. There was no "dead-line" save such as the mind fixes. Age has nothing to say about vista. Edwin Mims, for thirty years head of the English Department of Van-

derbilt University, invariably gave, as first assignment to all freshmen, Tennyson's "Ulysses":

"Old age hath yet his honor and his toil . . . Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world . . . for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die. . . ."

At eighty-six, L. P. J.'s *locus ab quo* looks toward horizons stretching far beyond that "until."

A Thanksgiving Proclamation

THE REV. JAMES WILLS LENHART
Lexington, Massachusetts

WE THE PEOPLE OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA:

INCLINED by custom but compelled by Faith we turn aside in public thanksgiving to acknowledge the dependence of our national existence upon Almighty God and to commit our national way and our private destiny to His Sovereign Will. In so doing we set our gratitude for this land with its traditions of freedom under the very simple and direct proposition that the "Earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof." As we must belong to the land before it can belong to us, just so must we, in all our history both past and future, belong to God before He can belong to us. Therefore in celebrating our ideals at their highest with their emphasis upon rights for man as man and even justice for all, because these rights are endowed by our Father they belong not to us alone but to His Children everywhere. We can only pray that we here will be fit instrument for His gift.

In days like these when we in this land are sheltered from the storm and favored beyond desert or estimation, we renounce, as impossible, spiritual isolationism. Our welfare is tempered, not heightened but tempered, by glaring contract between our lot and others. With His yoke upon us we are linked in fate and fact with the suffering and salvation, the terror and triumph, of all men everywhere. In their relief and redemption is our fate because it is our Faith. In the heart's gift of American homes through the service and sacrifice of our sons in this cause is the measure of our sincerity.

In this spirit as we proclaim through the conflict and divisions of strife the essential unity of mankind, so above the conflict and the separation of loved ones we rejoice that "nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God through Christ Jesus our Lord." In confidence and thankfulness we commit their care to His Mercy and Protection.

Therefore as Americans it is right that we give thanks in our tradition for the mercies of Justice, Freedom, Lovingkindness, Peace—resolved, as we prize them, to let no occasion go without extending these highest of men's ideals throughout this land and to all the world.

Therefore as Christians we join our fellow Christians and sister churches throughout the world in ascribing to Him the ultimate source of our Thanksgiving and seeking through His Son our Salvation and that for all mankind.

GOD SAVE HIS KINGDOM.

Given this twenty-third day of November in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and forty-four. ("Dated" and dateless—THE EDITOR.)

Everlasting Thanksgiving

The Rev. Caradoc J. Morgan
Pilgrim Congregational Church, Portland, Oregon

Thanksgiving be unto our God for ever and ever.—Revelation 7:20

We have much for which to thank Thee, God
When we count life's blessings!
For this our land, the long-sought home
Of those who faced the perils of the sea;
This is the land the Pilgrim sought
To live his sovereign-self, and worship God in freedom;
For such a heritage, born of hope and fulfilled by sacrifice,
We thank Thee, God.

Father, we thank Thee for Thy patience;
Sitting in silence, withholding Thy judgments;
Watching our wilfulness, yet staying Thy wrath;
Grieved by our boastings, yet tenderly waiting;
Knowing our natures, yet the Friend who forgives us;
Father, we thank Thee.

Father, we thank Thee
For the dawning of life's true meaning;
For the courage to face what we once feared;
For our willingness to admit our social sinfulness and moral bankruptcy;
For our confession that we have acted insanely, knowing the consequences;
For recovery of hope which dares to hang on in impenetrable darkness;
For the return to values by which we measure the good and true;
For the prayer of the faithful for One World in thought and word and deed;
Father, we thank Thee.

Father, we thank Thee
For hearts that love and understand;
For dreams that haunt us into action;
For a faith in eternal verities;
For widening horizons which prophesy enduring peace;
For the sweetness of the bread of labor honestly earned;
For the song of bird and beauty of flower which teach us to trust an unfailing Providence;
For the blended ministry of suffering and joy, without which there is no perfection;
Father, we thank Thee.

What Symbol for Christianity?

The Rev. Richard B. Carleton
Pittsfield, N. H.

IT is a well-known truism that religion is not really any outward act but something within. It is belief; it is sincerity and honesty. But oddly enough a church service consists of a series of outward acts which we call ritual. A Congregational church is not one which is known as ritualistic but every church which holds regular services—even the Quaker meeting—has a set form or ritual into which the leader and people must put meaning. Dean Sperry has a favorite story about the two little churches on an island off the Maine coast who were contemplating uniting to hold one service. "But," said the old resident, "I don't think they ever will. You see, they sing three hymns, and we sing two."

Professor Whitehead, in his *Religion in the Making,* traces all this in a fascinating argument. He says, "Ritual goes back beyond the dawn of history. . . . Flocks of birds perform their ritual evolutions in the sky . . . the primitive outcome of superfluous energy and leisure . . . (it) exemplifies the tendency of living bodies to repeat their own actions. . . . Their repetition repeats the joy of exercise and the emotion of success." He further explains what he calls the "tremendous discovery" of how man learned to repeat these acts because they were emotionally satisfying.

Now at this point in history we are so trained that in most instances we make our feelings wait for an appointed time on a certain day. Funerals, weddings, graduations, memorial services—we even keep our personal feelings over some lesser event of our lives, pent up within us until we can get to home or church or forest glade there to give vent to our feelings almost as though we had planned to laugh or cry ahead of the actual event. This waiting, this anticipation, this pouring of content into form "sensitizes the organism," makes us imagine and think apart from our regular work. And Whitehead also adds this sentence which I wish could be brought home to every congregation anywhere, "Religion and play have the same origin in ritual." Religion, then, is divine play—the truly religious person is one who worships with all the enthusiasm, the fierce intent, and the concentration that go into sport.

I

Our ritual centers in a symbol, and the symbol is not only the center but is caught up into all the feeling and thought and action which go into worship. The central symbol occupies the central place of attention so that immediately upon entering the church our eyes are focused upon that one symbol above all others. Our worship begins at that point. I well remember the moment—the first step—when I entered the church I now serve. My eyes went directly to the Cross upon the Altar.

The Cross has been and is the most widely-used symbol for Christianity. It is the symbol of Catholic Christianity, or, in other words, it is the symbol of The One Church. The Cross stands for the theology of the historic Church. See the Cross and you see God's chosen Man dying there because of His concentration to humanity. The Cross means One Authority, One Way, One Church, One God who suffers with all those who suffer. The Cross is empty because God finally conquered over the powers of evil and death and rose triumphant. This is the meaning of our symbol, the Cross.

But there is another symbol, also, which our evangelical churches have used since the days of the Reformation. That is the

open Bible placed upon a pulpit. This symbol stands for the right of any believer whom the people choose to come forward and interpret the story and teachings of the Bible. The evangelical emphasis has been upon the story, the story of Christ the leader, the redeemer, the one who by his very example makes a man ashamed of the way he has been living, repentant, resolved to begin anew to live the right life. So that the end result has usually been an emphasis upon the good life, ethics, honesty. Along with that, religion has been understood as an individual thing, something which no other could interfere with, whether that other be a neighbor, another church, some other organization, even the state itself. The minister of the ordinary evangelical church has the right to tell his people the story, to remind them of the story of Christ in any way that he can, but aside from that he has no other hold upon his people and they do not have to listen to him. God is the judge, not man. This right of the people I personally would defend to the utmost—even the right of the non-believer not to believe until he sees with his own eyes and hears with his own ears. There is an evil spirit abroad today which would condemn any man who does not observe some religion. This is not a Christian attitude.

II

There is still a third symbol for Christianity which I would present to your minds, which to me is more important and more meaningful than the other two. This third symbol was equal in standing with the other two when Christianity began and it was only the rise of the one authoritative church which made the Cross slightly more important, and therefore accepted as the one central symbol. This symbol is the Communion Table itself. The first Christian acts of worship by the disciples were the repeating of the Last Supper. It was the symbol he had directly given to them by his own words: "Do this in remembrance of me." They went to the Synagogue, heard the Holy Scriptures interpreted, and that was like the Reformation idea of the open Bible. But it was Hebraic, not yet Christian. And they were all talking about the Cross and its meaning, but until Paul preached and wrote his letters there must have been a theology of Love and a theology of Good Works and a theology of the Word but not one authoritative theology of the Cross. The first Christian symbol was the Lord's Table.

So in the very first church-buildings built by Christian congregations there was the nave or place for the congregation, and there was the transept or smaller part where the worship centered, and in the center of this section was the Communion Table *behind which* the priest stood when he served the congregation. He did not turn his back to the people. It was only as the bishop became the ruler that the Communion Table was put up high against the wall where only the priest could be, serving for and instead of the people themselves.

Our church—the world-wide Church—is today a fellowship. Its fitting symbol is the Lord's Table around which all the disciples come equally. There is no more real and moving news for our churches than the progress of today's world-wide effort to feed people, rebuild their civilization, and imbue it with the spirit of love and fairness and helpfulness to absolutely all people in the name of Christ. This is the real news of our day. This is the only progress worth noting, if there is anything. To find it in the daily newspapers you must read here and there and between the lines. But as a matter of fact, among all the doubts and cynical viewpoints in people's minds, it is these facts which they find they can believe and very few others. What real Christian hope is there for England, for Holland, for the Germans and Poles, for the Chinese? For that matter—equally Christian—what Christian hope are we giving to the Jews, the Russians, the Japanese?

III

In the May Minister's Quarterly Frederick Thompson suggests that our leading novelist, Hemingway, and our leading theologian, Reinhold Niebuhr, ought to go off on a fishing trip together. He says, "There ought to be a committee of the Federal Council that just arranges fishing trips for such men. John L. Lewis ought to be sent off to some well-stocked pool with a man of the caliber of the former Archbishop Temple." Which prompted our editor to say "Why not around the Communion Table?" This is not authority from above, as the Cross suggests; it is not teaching and example all for one person, as the open Bible gives. This means acknowledging some good in each and all and that acknowledgment shared and the truth sought together. God is in the good within each of us.

One more real thought. Whether we like it or not society today is being planned. It must be planned and it is being planned. We are not doing the planning. Science is doing the planning. Day by day in every way, no matter what our former or present beliefs, we are outwardly and eventually inwardly conforming to the applications of Science to our world. Fascism has not done this; neither has the New Deal, nor Communism, nor the Roman Catholic Church. Science has made it possible, no, indispensable. With planning life becomes more and more simple for the individual (and this simplicity he knows he must have!). The old-fashioned New England farm was anything *but* simple! So let us admit that the world must be planned, if not by the scientists themselves, at least by people who recognize, respect and know Science through and through. The political danger of our time is any one group which will set itself up to do the planning. Hitler and Roosevelt started doing it the same year, 1933; the Communists started doing it long before; the C.I.O. is all out to plan it for the benefit of the American laborer; and the Roman Catholic Church is all out to influence society for the benefit of the hierarchy; and if we would admit it, even our Protestant ministers are skilled in the ways of winning the people to a plan!

Now Science, by its very definition, cannot work with One Authoritative Church, which is what the Cross stands for. Neither can it work with the authoritative Word from the Bible, which the symbols of Bible and Pulpit stand for. It can work only with free minds meeting together to seek the truth for man under God. Indeed, Science ought to be a staunch defender of Christianity, for it was Christianity which (in the Reformation!) set men free to pursue Science. We said then to Science, "Ye shall know the truth, and the Truth shall make you free." Science now turns to us and says, "You must be free, and then you will find the truth." Truth sets us free to pursue truth! From Child Health Service to the controlling of Atomic Energy the only way to truth is to meet together around a common table—but that common table must at the same time be the table of the Lord Christ.

I give you the Lord's Table as the center of our worship and work in the name of God.

On Exchanging Parishes

The Rev. John Clarence Petrie
Houston, Texas

MUCH has been said in praise of the advantages of an occasional pulpit exchange. Another man preaches in your church and you preach in his. You can dig into the barrel for an old sermon and for one week you are delivered from the burden of having to have something to say on the following Sunday before a congregation that must have long since soaked up all the ideas you ever had, including those borrowed from Fosdick. Each congregation is relieved of having to see the same face in the pulpit. If there are other advantages they are slight. But exchange parishes for a few weeks and you will see a difference; I mean of course going to another locality, living in your friend's house, using his study, moving about among his parishioners. I have just had this rare privilege.

I

I have never seen the parson whose house I have been occupying for two months. He has never seen me. I am minister of a Unitarian church associated with Congregationalism, he is a full-fledged Congregationalist. He took me sight unseen on the recommendation of his state superintendent—who in turn has never seen me. It was quite a gamble on their part whose outcome they will have to assess. From my end it has been clear profit all the way through—and clear joy. In the course of our negotiations by mail I wrote that his wife need not worry about the furniture being burned by cigarettes as neither of us smoke. He replied, "It's too bad you don't smoke. The house will miss it." He had already left when we arrived. The parsonage had been closed for several days. We found the key under the flower box and let ourselves in. I saw at once that the house would now miss the rich aroma of an excellent pipe mixture. He had done a magnificent job of saturating the walls, the furniture, the books, with the fragrance of his much burning briar. Somehow it made me feel that he was here to welcome me.

His little study has a small collection of books—all that he thought worth while packing when he moved here. A wise man, I could see, who refused to be burdened with a thousand volumes he would never read again. And it is right here in the study that the real advantage for this kind of exchange stands out. No two of us are alike. A man educated by the Jesuits at Fordham with several years of Catholic seminary training as a foundation for three years of Anglican theology is in a new world as he moves among the books of a Williams, Union, Oberlin man who has spent forty years in the Congregational ministry. Here is no *Summa* of St. Thomas, no Maritain, no Gilson, no Chesterton. There is no Temple, no Streeter. Here is considerable current religious psychology. Here are T. R. Glover, H. V. Morton, Hugh Vernon White, and Paul Sabatier. It is better than a summer refresher course at a seminary to pull down these volumes, dip into them here and there. I found myself writing the titles of some I would try to acquire for my own library.

II

Here is one I never heard of, a small volume by Laura H. Wild, *A Literary Guide to the Bible.* It is dated 1922 and announces that the author taught at Mt. Holyoke. It had just what I need for that talk in the Fall before the Women's Association at Christ Episcopal Church on Hebrew Poetry—the best approach I have yet found. I will get that book if it is

still to be had. And here are the two volumes of von Hügel's *Essays and Addresses*. Were I in a great library I should pass von Hügel up for those who have made some attempt to write English. And so for years I have been passing him up. It was a great error. This man has as much antidote for current Protestant shallowness as any of the neo-orthodox. We who will wrestle for days with one page of Niebuhr, and weeks with one sentence of Tillich's, will find the old baron much easier going. Furthermore he can be understood. What he says about Hell is something to give us considerable pause — and what he says about institutional Christianity being a necessary outcome of the sacramental principle. The religion of the spirit of which the Sabatiers boasted turns out at the end to have been built up, just like every form of human knowledge, on sense experience after all. So even the Quakers cannot escape matter and history.

To jump to another stimulating writer of whom I had never read a word there was W. Macneile Dixon's Gifford Lectures, *The Human Situation*. Shall we run from life or face it? In the midst of what seem to be denials of Christian orthodoxy we find the total result to be that of the ethical realism of Jesus Christ. It fits into von Hügel's sacramentalism. This book too I must own if it can be obtained. It is to be read, marked, learned, inwardly digested.

III

You not only preach for two months in the other man's pulpit, you attend Sunday School, you conduct the services of worship. If this were a large city parish perhaps all would be laid out for you. You would be asked by the organist for hymn numbers and leave everything to him except the actual officiating. But this is a small parish and another one of your friend's characteristics crops up when he tells you by letter before your arrival that you will arrange your own order of service entirely. Apparently he does not think you will celebrate High Mass at his altar, nor arrange one of those monstrosities that are called services in humanistic churches. He has not warned you of any sore spots in the theology of his people, spots you must avoid as you would the plague. If there are any complexes in this parish you will have to discover them for yourself. After two months I have found none. What a parson, and what a congregation! You find yourself examining your conscience. Could your own people be left so entirely to the mercies of a stranger? Would you so trust a brother minister as not even to make the tiniest suggestion to "help him"? Parson, you are learning something pretty late in life about the quality of a great soul; one in which there is no slightest taint of smallness.

The very fact that this is a Congregational church, not Unitarian; that because of local circumstances most of its members still say, "I am a Methodist but I belong to this parish"; this very fact is good for you. There are members of the Evangelical and Reformed Churches out there, some Presbyterians. If you were ever the kind of Unitarian who made capital out of the "superstitions" of Methodism; who agreed with the recent attack by the American Unitarian Association upon the neo-orthodox; if you ever were one of those bright boys from Beacon Hill feeling a vocation to crush the supernatural (which you have mistakenly identified with the miraculous); you must now forget it. These people are looking up at you in the pulpit for spiritual food. If you cannot preach denominational polemics then you are down to either cheap newspaper banalities or you must probe for the deep things of the spirit common to all the churches. By all means, when you exchange parishes try to get a parish of another denomination.

IV

While you are just a visitor in the midst you will not be expected to make parish calls. And you will not. And so for the

first two or three weeks you will have the books and the nearby beach to yourself. But long before your two months are up you will be invited to go in with one couple to the nearest city for dinner and a night ball game. Then the invitations begin to pour in. You remonstrate in vain that you do not want to be entertained nor to put people out. They look hurt and remind you that you went out with such and such last week. And there in their homes, in their cars, in the bleachers, you pick up your friend's trail. Here a scrap, there a bit, which you piece together into a pattern. Here is a church that has been discouraged from a series of misfit parsons and then he came along, taking things easy after long service in large parishes, bringing them the fruit of a well-stored mind and a soul rich with the experiences of the Holy Spirit. The whole community knows him intimately and loves him. He is their friend whether they go to church or not. This is the time when you really begin to examine your conscience. Is that what an exchange parson would find in your parish? And it is time you made that examination. You are getting no younger rapidly and you fit it into what von Hügel wrote about heaven and hell. He said, if there was one thing in the New Testament that could not be denied, something that was underneath everything else in it, it was this, that this life we are living now is absolutely decisive. You will hear a voice saying, "Choose ye this day."

Parsons need preaching to. Exchange parishes for a time. Everything in your friend's parish will preach to you. His spirit, though he be in China or Moscow, like the after fragrance of his favorite mixture, will be there all the time preaching to you.

From Darkness to Light

Mrs. Elizabeth Beckwith

Beverly, Mass.

HOW possible it is, in our world as it is constituted today, for the so-called Christian mind of the individual to become distorted and perplexed. The confusions of life seep in upon us and we find ourselves overwhelmed by the vastness of problems utterly beyond our thinking, and suffering completely engulfing our abilities to make a great enough response. Before we know it, the very thing we have within that is precious and with which we intend to meet life becomes stultified and unequal to its task and its opportunity. We find ourselves not only bewildered and with a sense of weakness, but also deeply ashamed and contrite of heart. In a real sense of the word we feel lost. There is forlornity in the very word. Yet it is a true word, for we are lost in the midst of life and that is the utmost in abandonment. The thought of annihilation can be borne. One would be helpless and silently acquiescent to its irrevocability. But to be lost is too great a sadness to be forever endured.

Like a shaft of light coming through the darkness, like the gentle touch of a sensitive hand coming in through the rude blows of pain, is the thought of God. Dimly had we remembered Him, but with no acute sense of confidence. With low heat had desire been burning in our hearts, but now the flames flare up. Now if we but give His spirit small entrance, life will be undergirded with strength, motivated with power, flooded with a light that at times will be almost too great to bear. The words of Jesus come to us with more poignant truth than they ever have before. "I came to seek and to save that which was lost." We see that He

lid not mean only, as we had thought, ost from Heaven. He knew the dire dis-ress of a human spirit lost in the mael-trom of this mortal life. He knows our eed is a desperate and a present need. Therefore, in calm, in peace, in gratitude e turn to Him who channels for us as uch of the love of God as our spirits an bear. With refreshed and enlightened earts, with clear eyes and unbound hands e take unto ourselves the message of lvation.

* * *

There are very few things in our lives at survive the stripping processes of me. For many years life seems to be cumulative thing and we acquire homes nd careers and friends and a many-aceted philosophy of what constitutes the hristian faith. The realization that after ll very few things matter, but those reatly, is delayed for some of us. De-ayed perhaps by happy events and a cer-ain tranquil richness in living. For others he process is hastened by pain, by be-eavement, by a paucity of life's joyous nd fulfilling experiences. For all deeply iving people the time of realization is ound to come.

When it does we are forced back into very elementary and at the same time rofound kind of thinking. We cannot ossibly be dishonest or rationalize, for pon the purity of our perception depends ur soul's very life. Outward events can-ot matter to us because we are separate rom them. We will go back and meet hem, but in the meantime we must have a sense of separation in order that we be cleansed from the past and made equal in our spirit's most inner recesses for the future.

What, then, are the few convictions that emerge in the heart in this hiatus between the past and the future? For one thing, time is done away with—it is only spiritual *being* that counts. God, "so great that even the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain Him—so small that He can dwell within my heart" becomes the supreme, almost the only, reality. Then love brings you back to earth, possessing you, giving to you, taking from you, until second to the passion of your being *for* God is the compulsion to give of Him to every living creature. Whether this be called Christian purpose or the divine love seeking to be expressed, I do not know. Third in this time of clarity comes one more conviction. Life is on-going, eternal, creative in ways we cannot guess, with a glory we cannot yet know.

These three things seem separate, but they are one. Welded, forged, unified—I know not what word is truest—we become purified of dross through our willingness to merge our life in the life of God, and we become spiritual entities, clear-cut and definite. We even know that we are such. Our prayer becomes one of gratitude to God for His being, and for the bright light with which He touches our being when we in turn touch Him, and for the beauty there is in receiving and in giving, and for the eternal quality of true life in Him, abiding as it does throughout all time and space.

Protestantism Is So Prosaic

The Rev. Fred Smith

Minister, First Congregational Church, Leavenworth, Kansas

PROTESTANTISM, in the main, is, oh, so prosaic that it is a pain in more places than I care to count. Only last week, on a day of prayer, I sat in a pew that made prayer almost impossible. The angles of the pew interfered sadly with my upward-rising aspirations. All those who were present undoubtedly believed in the Holy Spirit, the Comforter; but they who built those

pews did not build them to be of any assistance to the Holy Spirit in the ministry of comfort. I had thought to receive comfort and counsel to enable me to bear my cross more worthily but the discomfort of the pew in which I sat, or rather suffered, sadly deflected my thoughts from cross-bearing, or, rather, added to the burden of it.

For the discomfort of the pew was but of a piece with almost all the rest of the building. It was ugliness incarnated. Built presumably to the pattern of a Greek temple, even to the hinting of the Parthenon, shoddy work had stripped it of any right to that remembrance. And afterwards we were entertained at tea in a room whose one feature of dramatizing religion lay in a small altar, candle-lighted by six candles, with a picture for centerpiece of "The Blue Boy" by Gainsborough.

And I had another experience of the pain which comes through the inability of so many Protestant churches to dramatize effectively to the eye the essential pageantry of Christianity.

Additional to the pain of it there comes also, too often, the prohibition of the right to enjoy what little there is to enjoy of the dramatic quality of religion within a Protestant church. I recall a rather magnificent Protestant Church (I will not identify it by using its denominational name) which, in the history of that denomination once played an epoch-making part. Perhaps there is a tablet of remembrance within its walls to remind people of that event. I forgot to look for it the last time I was there, since I did not need to be reminded to be reverential there in that particular. But one day, happening by (to use the diction of the King James Version of the Holy Scriptures, so much over-praised in our time), I thought I would enter to see what I could see. But this minister did not get into the church. He tried four doors and found them all securely locked. And he had not enough religion left to try any more. A church that could be dramatized as a shrine. But what do Protestant churches know about the worth of a shrine? Not much, if you ask me.

But do seminaries know much more? I was in one recently. A Convocation (thank God, it was not called a "retreat") was being held there. A special series of lectures were given to us, presumably on a religious foundation. That is the right word: given. A better mode of presentation would have earned the lectures the right to be described as "presented!" If God was present he was taken for granted. No prayer was offered to acknowledge his presence or to seek his guidance. Well, you know what professors are. Through four evenings, from four different mouthpieces we were told about the atomic bomb. And for one who listened and wondered there were reverberating undertones and overtones. But none said that it thundered. But for one there was thunder in the air. He was in a Protestant church, save the mark. On a university campus! It was the acme of the dissidence of dissent which some Victorians said something about. But they are now but drifting dust.

But more than that was given to the pilgrim seeking the dramatic in religion. The lectures through the day were given in a chapel, converted into a class-room. Perhaps the word should be: "diverted." The lectern-pulpit was found to be very movable. Each professor had his go at it. Then they fit themselves to their subject, but never a thought to the fitting of themselves to their environment. Some of them would not have known that there was any need to do that, anyhow. Professors, like the rest of us, have their blind spots. And one listener became hungry for beauty; for the sense of the dramatic. And the Lord took heed to the hunger of his servant. One professor became more than a voice. His words became himself. He spoke with the aid of his arms and limbs. And I heard the sound of many voices, Luther must have thundered as this man; the prophets were like unto him. And my hunger was somewhat appeased.

Then came the satisfying in full of the hunger. I was about to board a car to take me, in the early morning, out to the prosaic speaking professors. And I saw the Church of old Saint Mary. I went in just to look around. It was about seven-thirty in the morning. And what a surprise I received! Instead of a church with a few quiet souls seeking uplift for the day I found that mass was being celebrated (note that word, prosaic Protestants) at two altars. I stayed. And I received my reward. Something in that service appealed to the highest and lowest in me. My professor the day before, to a query that I had put to him about the Catholic Church being the theater of God, had said that the use of a "dead" language crippled the service. And here I was, listening with my whole being.

As Wordsworth said on the mountain height: Language in spoken word I needed not. Philosophy was coming to me, understandably, in pageantry. But that was not all. To the right of the altar I saw a priest kneeling in worship. I etched him into my memory for future emulation. Then somewhat to the left of me a woman arose. I glanced toward her. She was what is called in America, a colored woman. It was plain to see that she was what a professor would have called "under-privileged." But no one sniffed; no one looked askance at her. And it was plain to see she had got something, and that something was deep and profound. As she left across the space that she had occupied my eye caught the vision of a young girl, ninth grader in school, I should guess. Upon her face was a light that never was on land nor sea. I quietly arose to leave. I was in the mood to genuflect. The service deserved it and God. And I went back to the Protestant Seminary.

But that day, instead of going in to listen about poetry and religion (I had seen my fill of it for one day, and was it good! I should say) I went into the room of one of the professors and we talked about drama and religion and he saw my point. Suddenly he turned, took from his files a booklet, threw it to me, saying "What do you think of that?" I flipped the page and found myself looking at the syllabus of a course that he had arranged to be taught in that seminary. The title was: Religion and the Arts. My heart missed a beat. Then I recovered and with an emotion that might have looked strange to him, I said: "At last, after twenty years of suggesting this to this seminary, you have arrived." Perhaps with training such our coming ministers will get in a course like this there is hope that Protestantism may yet come into an ability to dramatize the Eternal more significantly that it has yet seemed able to do.

1945-1946 Associates in Reading and Discussion, of the Department of The Ministry Congregational-Christian Churches

WHAT IS IT? It is a Committee of Ministers named by our denominational Department of the Ministry.

WHAT IS IT FOR? To urge the formation of small groups of ministers who shall meet together:

1. To read certain selected books.
2. To stimulate the mind by free discussion of their contents.
3. To continue the habit of persisting study.
4. To receive the influences of the

close friendships and mutual respect which such whips to the mind and such stir to the spirit can effect.

HAVE ANY OF OUR MEN BEEN DOING THIS? Yes. For ten years this group of Associates has met regularly doing the above things.

HAVE ANY OTHERS BEEN DOING THIS —WITH US? Yes. During these years, other groups have used the books and methods suggested by this central committee. We have had some interchanges of experiences with them.

(Of course, other fine groups have done a similar piece of work, but with books of their choice, and with methods of their own. Blessings on them!)

WHY DOES THIS COMMITTEE SELECT THE BOOKS? It is not because they possess superior wisdom or wish to dictate.

But it is because we have found from experience that when we sit down together with a selected volume for review and discussion, something does happen to us that does not happen when we do a hit-or-miss thing.

And this warms our imagination: to picture similar groups of Associates at other centers, having the same books we have, and experiencing the same benefits to mind and heart which have come to us.

So—From the many volumes brought to the meetings of our committee, this year we suggest definite books, those which we have found to be of great influence on our devotion to our faith, our efforts of intelligence, and the desire to improve the quality of our ministry.

AND—on the basis of such an experience, we have the desire to have other groups around the country work with us, with the same tools, and for the same purpose.

WE KNOW it has been a great thing for us personally, and we believe it would be an exciting thing for the denomination, if many of us, in groups of Associates here and there, together knew we were intelligently searching; having the same volumes in front of us, and with mind and heart—free and equal—keeping ourselves alert, our spirits open, and deepening our friendships.

HOW START GROUPS OF ASSOCIATES? Some one man invites a few other men to form one.

How Is a Group Linked up with This Committee?

Write the Chairman. He will

1. Welcome you into the Associates.
2. See that your desire to have the Selected Books is met.
3. Tell you the cost of the books, and discount by Pilgrim Press, on the set.
4. Order the books for you.
5. Ask for your counsel and advice.
6. Help in any way you think he can.

ARE THEIR ANY REQUIREMENTS FROM YOU? Only that you secure and read these books, freely discuss them, and exchange experiences of your Associates with us.

THE BOOKS SELECTED FOR THIS YEAR are named on pages 29 and 30. Brief statements about them have been prepared by four members of the central committee.

OF COURSE YOU ARE AWARE of the difficulty of selecting books for another's use. We know it well. We wanted to mention a lot of them. Here are a few which can supplement our Selected List:

THE PREDICAMENT OF MODERN MAN by Trueblood.
PURITAN AND DEMOCRACY by Perry.
THE LORD'S PRAYER by Freeman.
MEET AMOS AND HOSEA by Wolfe.
SAINTS AND STRANGERS by Willison.

Competently Aided and Inspired by
Dr. Frederick L. Fagley and
Dr. James F. English

The Committtee Is

Carl B. Bare	R. I.
Clarence S. Dunham	Conn.
Arthur S. Haberlin	Chaplain, U. S. A.
Harold G. Jones	Mass.
Leonard J. Kramer	Mass.
Albert J. Penner	Mass.
Henry E. Robinson	Conn.

thur A. Rouner N. H.
len E. Russell Conn.
fford O. Simpson Conn.
ax H. Webster Vt.

Chairman, Alexander H. Abbott, 122 ion Street, Norwich, Conn.

OUR SELECTED LIST

E DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL by orgia Harkness, *Abingdon-Cokesbury* .50)

his book is valuable for both ministers d thoughtful laymen. It gives creative ight into the age-old problem, spiritual pression. The outline is clear and the ring orientated from medieval phrase- gy. In answering the question, What ne Dark Night of the Soul? the author pands such psychological concepts as istrations, self-distrust, loneliness and ritual impotence. The solution is of- ed by drawing upon biblical and psy- logical writers. There is an excellent roduction to four great spiritual classics ich deal with the subject: St. John of e Cross, Madam Guyon, Thomas à mpis, and Brother Lawrence. The au- or's brief and penetrating summary of se alone recommends the book.

(*The two following books are recom- ended as a unit.*)

HE CHRISTIAN ANSWER edited by Henry Van Dusen, *Scribner's* ($2.50)

This exceedingly valuable little book is e fruit of twelve years of "full, frank d leisurely exchange of ideas" by about enty-five members of a first-rate group ministers and teachers of religion, of idely different viewpoints and experi- ce," and "is directed primarily, though t exclusively, to thoughtful men and omen who stand somewhat outside the ristian tradition." Professors Paul J. illich, Theodore M. Greene, George F. homas, Edwin E. Aubrey and John nox, in five solid, meaty chapters, deal ith a diagnosis of our present world uation; the intellectual credibility of the ristian belief; content of the Christian Gospel; social implications of Christian- ity; challenge of Christianity to the in- dividual. Closely reasoned, clearly writ- ten, concise and compelling, this book is a basic discussion of the world in which we live, and a cogent argument for the resonableness and relevance of our Christian faith. Every minister will want to read, ponder, and re-read.

OUR CHRISTIAN FAITH by Walter Horton, *Pilgrim Press* (Paper $.75, cloth $1.75)

This little volume is intended to be a guide-book for older young people and adult laymen, in the principles of the Christian Faith as commonly held in our denomination. It is based on the "State- ment of Faith" prepared by our Theo- logical Commission. There may be con- siderable disagreement as to whether this does in fact give expression to the faith of modern Congregationalists: which fact points up the value of the book for dis- cussion. Because of its purpose, it is recommended as highly important for serious study by both lay people and min- isters of our churches.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY by M. Searle Bates, *Harper & Brother* ($3.50)

Although "blessed" by the Foreign Missions Council and the Federal Coun- cil of Churches, the author has used full religious liberty in diagnosing a perennial problem. It is reassuring in our days of warring ideologies to find such a fair description of Church and State in areas of conflict: Russia, the Moslem countries, India. It is likewise desirable to distin- guish between conformity and tolerance, tolerance and liberty, liberty and anarchy, as these are found in the social and re- ligious interaction between the individual and the group. Here is stated, with shad- ings of philosophical theory and historical contingency, what liberty means to such divergent groups as Catholic conservatives and liberals, Protestant sectarians and traditionalists. This study will endure as a "standard work," because it is both just and comprehensive.

JESUS OF NAZARETH by Joseph Klausner, *Macmillan* ($2.50) (first published 1925)

Here is a far more important work than the author's widely read, recent "From Jesus to Paul." This is no novel, no "Sholem Asch treatment," but a scholarly, objective yet compellingly readable account of the life of Jesus, by a Jew who knows whereof he speaks concerning the times of the Master. No Christian can "really understand" Jesus, without this book or its equivalent. Neither can he understand the Jews, without it. There is some special pleading by the author, though it is not subtle enough to deceive. His attempts at apology for his people are in reality a shattering spiritual indictment of Judaism, and show why the contemporary rapprochement between Christianity and Judaism is well-nigh impossible.

Will you start a group of Associates, if you do not belong to one?

Will you continue a group of Associates, if you do belong to one?

Just Between Ourselves

The Department of the Ministry

TO ALL PASTORS: You will be interested, we are sure, in the development of the work of this new Department. The General Council approved and endorsed the program recommended by the Department. The Council with the assistance of the Board of Home Missions and the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions provided funds for the modest needs of our budget. The members of the Department held a two-day meeting in August at Deering, New Hampshire, to implement the program. Now we are getting under way along several most promising lines.

SALARIES: The immediate need for a restudy of pastors' salaries is evident to every one, but it is not too easy to secure action by all the churches. The cost of living, it is accepted, has risen 39 per cent since 1941 and is still rising. Home Expense, as reported in the Year Book, has risen from fifteen million in 1941 to nineteen million in 1945 or 27 per cent, which is only two-thirds of the general rise in living costs. But while Home Expense has risen two-thirds of the rise in cost of living, the percentage paid pastors has not quite kept pace with the other items included in Home Expense, for in 1941 Pastors' Salaries totaled $6,394,000 or 43 per cent of total Home Expense, while in 1946 Pastors' Salaries were $7,600,000 or 40 per cent of the total. Thus it will be seen that while Home Expense has risen in only a two-thirds proportion to the cost of living, Pastors' Salaries lag even more.

We must consider that churches already paying from fair to good salaries have been more alert to increase the salary than have many churches paying inadequate salaries. If the total increase of pastors' salaries had been uniformly spread, the situation might not be so tragic. The fact remains that while with few exceptions pastors' salaries are distressingly low, in many, many smaller churches they are still tragically inadequate.

It stands to reason then that a "first" concern of the churches is that the ministry shall be fairly paid. A whole flock of ills come from this weakness. The pastor under our system hesitates to talk of his own needs—and in the face of so many and so urgent appeals for the world's needs, he is most reluctant to broach the matter. The denomination recognizes this unhappy situation, and the

National Committee on Ministers' Salaries, of which Mr. James H. Compton, Box 24, Hillside Station, Wichita 8, Kansas, is chairman, has sponsored an appeal to the churches which is being widely circulated through the State Conference offices. Also the Executive Committee of the General Council has approved a minimum standard as follows:

"We believe rural churches expecting to call fully-prepared fulltime ministers should offer salaries of not less than $2,000 plus parsonage and transportation expense for parish work, and a reasonable increase where there are children, and that city churches calling full-prepared fulltime ministers should not pay less than $2,400 and parsonage and parish transportation expense, and a reasonable increase where there are children."

Now, brethren, it is a hard thing to say, but say it we must, that however embarrassing it is, here is a matter *you should take up with your Board* if you truly feel it should be done. It may be you will care to share this letter with your Board.

Before you begin to look elsewhere to find a church which will pay a living salary (the usual procedure when the salary is totally inadequate), try first talking the matter over with your own Board. It may be the members are only waiting for you to mention this matter which should be approached in friendly manner —and beware of ultimatums in talking with friends!

It is suggested in this approach that comparison be made by each one of you, in so far as possible, with the compensation or income of educators, particularly your school principal, doctors and other professional persons, as well as skilled labor. For while teachers' salaries in many areas are far too low they are more adequate than many of our lower paid ministers. The other groups will show average earnings far above the national average for ministers.

Figures compiled by this committee, from reports received from twenty-four conferences with 2,377 churches, show that 710 or 29.5 per cent pay $1,500.00 or less. More than half of these pay $1,000.00 or less, and only a few more than 50 per cent of this group are furnished with parsonage. These circumstances should bring a blush of shame to the face of every lay person in our fellowship and while it may be distasteful to you to call this to the attention of your Board, it should make an impression that would be helpful in righting the inequality.

To Newcomers: Since spring there have come into the pastorate of our churches some newly ordained ministers, some by transfer from other denominations and some students and supplies who are with us for the time being. Let us say a word to each group; *To those newly ordained,* "You are entering the Christian ministry at a time when your leadership is greatly needed, the world's tragedy is due more to the lack of vital religion than to any other one cause. Its cure will come only in more and better religion. The whole church welcomes you to this ministry."

To those from other fellowships, "You too will find a welcome. We are in fact a great union church. More than half of our present pastors grew up in some other fellowship. They have found a freedom and a fellowship in our churches that has widened and blessed their ministry. We hope you will also."

To those who have come to our churches as guests of the denomination, "We hope your stay may be profitable both to you and to us. If you are planning to stay some time we most cordially invite you to become one with us by transferring your ministerial standing to the association to which your church belongs. Your church will appreciate such a move on your part and so will all of us. To become a member of the family, of course, has its responsibilities but it also has its rewards."

To All Pastors: May we say again, there are large resources in the denomination for your help. *The Herald* in its state edition with news and needs of the Mission Boards, *Advance* with news of the religious world, *Social Action* with its analysis of social trends and tensions, The Minister's Quarterly for your own reading and study, together with the publications of the Commission on Evangelism, the Council for Social Action, the Missions Council and the Pilgrim Press, are all worthwhile. If you do not have these helps, a postcard will bring you sample copies of our papers and a Pilgrim Press catalog.

In-Service Training: To meet the needs of a world growing in complexity we must all give ourselves to careful study and continued discipline. Our minds and our hearts must be greatly enlarged. The reading lists of *The Associates* should be given attention—as this group urges, we need more thorough reading. To work the truth into the fiber of our thought we need the give and take of open, free discussion. The seminar method of learning has its values. It is earnestly advised that ministers associate themselves in small groups, if necessary of two or three, but larger groups of five to seven wherever possible, to study current books and for the discussion of their teachings. How we need these days the open, unprejudiced and alert mind! For information write Rev. Alexander H. Abbott, 122 Union Street, Norwich, Connecticut; or to Rev. Donald Gaylord, 1219 Grandview Avenue, Martinez, California, Chairman of the Western Group of Associates now being organized.

Fraternally yours,

James F. English

Frederick L. Fagley

Kindly note the following paragraphs from members of the joint staff.

Comments from Staff Members

RECRUITING—Oliver Powell

My chief responsibility in my connection with the Department of the Ministry is to maintain contact with young people of *high school age* who are contemplating the Ministry as their field of full-time Christian service. My need, therefore, is to learn the names of such young people. Pastors can be of real help by reporting these names to me as soon as they learn of them. I shall follow through on all such names offering my services in an advisory capacity and reassuring the young people that the denomination is greatly interested in them and their future.

RECRUITING FOR THE A.B.C.F.M. —Loy Long

As candidate secretary of the American Board of Foreign Missions I need your help right now. Our twelve Missions are urgently calling for at least 150 new missionaries. The American Board wishes to send out this coming year nine doctors, six nurses, six ministers, four women religious and social workers, and twelve educators. Is there not at least one capable, consecrated person or family under thirty years of age in your church who would volunteer for one of these challenging positions if you confronted them with the opportunities for service abroad? Can you recommend to us any candidates?

For example, we need young doctors to follow the lead of Albert Schweitzer in Portuguese West Africa, and others who will carry on the ministry of health and healing in China, India and the Philippines in the spirit of Dr. Edward Hume, Dr. Robert Kennedy and Dr. Herbert Brokenshire. We shall be most grateful for any help you can give the candidate department.

THE RURAL FIELD—Thomas Alfred Tripp

Three oft-neglected factors are needed in church work:

1. Every pastor works in relation to community forces. No program exists in a sociological vacuum. In the rural church the fundamental elements are the people working in agriculture and living in the intimate relationships of the small town. "Know Your Community" is as important as "Know Thyself."

2. Pastors should be *leaders,* not dictators. People grow in spirit by doing spiritual work. Pastors must learn to develop programs and get things done by group processes, not by commanding others or by doing things their laymen should do. The church needs leadership, not *for* but *of* and *by* the people. This requires pastors who *lead,* not boss.

3. Reaching *all* the people in the community, not just one class, is of the greatest importance. Half the population is outside the church, often because "they are not our kind of people." What force will unite the people and community if the church fails to do so?

PLACEMENT—Horace Holton

Experience has shown me that the more ministers I know and with whom I am on terms of friendly fellowship, the better I shall be able to serve both the churches and the ministers. My first problem is to devise ways and means to implement this aspect of my work.

The problem of placement centers around three main items: first, the inadequate parish; second, the dissatisfied minister; third, the disaffected churches. The solution of the first problem rests upon a broad strategy on the part of the denomination, of which at present one does not see much evidence. The solution of the second and third problems is to be found, I am convinced, in raising the ideals and standards of the ministry itself; and this, I judge, is the immediate and continuing objective of the Joint Staff of the Department of the Ministry, of which I am proud to be a member.

Concerning Preaching the Parables

The Editor

THEY had been listening to a "Paper"—though it was hardly so formal as that—"On the Uses of Parables in Preaching." It was the first meeting for the year of, say, "The Cosmos Minister's Club." That is not its real name, but since its discussions usually take a more or less cosmic range it is quite as good as the rather unimaginative name the club really bears. Nor do the place and personnel really matter, though its members might not agree to that statement. Like all clerical clubs it cherishes its own traditions—though it might be duplicated across the continent. The Editor's pen could easily become reminiscent about clerical clubs. In his various migrations he has belong to many gracious fellowships of fellow-ministers and teachers. They brighten his "book of remembrance"; they have taught him how ministers do really live together as brethren with mutual regard, not thinking of themselves more highly than they ought to think, generous in their appreciations, considerate in their criticisms, concerned with the high quality of their vocations.

This particular club had planned for itself a series of "Sermons on the Parables of Jesus." The first paper was groundwork, and evoked a discussion which ebbed and flowed around the table till the street below began to darken a little with the early shadows of an October afternoon. The discussion, accentuated by the theme, ended where it did not start for. (That sentence deserves a citation for its sheer awkwardness. But it does describe what generally happens in such meetings.)

For here are the parables. Their significance cannot be overstressed. Jesus began with the parable of the Sower; he

ended with the parable of the Last Judgment. And they fill the pages of the Gospels in between. If the parables were taken out of the first three Gospels, the narratives would fall apart. They were Jesus' most characteristic way of teaching, and they are also in a way the preacher's most baffling challenge. Some of them are familiar as the hymns we sing over and over, the poems we know best, or the faces of our friends. They are like a timeless haunting music, they grow old without ceasing, and if a congregation know anything at all about the Gospels, they know the parables of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son and the Sower, striding across his stony little field and sowing broadcast prodigally. How can they be invested with any novelty or so preached as to leave the congregation in suspense, since the congregation are so reasonably sure to know the end from the beginning. Some of them are almost impossibly difficult, how can they be interpreted? In his quest for "fresh woods and pastures new" the preacher is quite likely to take the best known parables for granted, read them now and then for his morning lesson, and do no more about them. He avoids the more difficult, not to bewilder the congregation further and thus a wealth beyond the dreams of homiletic avarice is left unmined and unminted.

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Now all this goes both further and deeper. The parables are not the only familiar matter in the Gospels. There is, too, the Sermon on the Mount with *its* haunting music, its luminous profundities of wisdom, its injunctions and disclosures, its revelation of a way of life which touches all our shadowed horizons with a light from unclouded sources. This too is as familiar as a mother's lullaby, and as apparently impossible in our embattled world as a dream impassioned by desire and forever fading, not into the light, but into the darkness of our common day. How can one preach from a dream or a vision, or a strain of celestial music, while all that which the Sermon condemns protests against it and all that it enjoins eludes our hampered quest? And yet the Sermon like the parables is there, like the vows King Arthur asked of his knights—such a Gospel "as is a shame a man should not be bound by it yet the which no man can keep." All of which does not need much pressing to apply to wide ranges of preaching about what Jesus really taught, no not preaching about it but preaching what Jesus really taught. It does get preached, of course, for it is the sustaining substance of all Christian preaching, but, probably, on the whole, too incidentally. There is no single sentence to cover the situation. Perhaps the illusive simplicity as well as the self-demonstrating quality of Jesus' teaching is the preacher's handicap. He can debate its practicability; he cannot by any words of his own enhance its truth. Generations of preachers, therefore, have found their escape in theology, and if there is no longer amongst us, as with our more fundamental brethren, much doctrinal preaching, there is now any amount of psychological preaching and the elucidations. [Sic] of neo-orthodoxy.

We grasp, to steady us and get foothold, at current catchwords. Ten years ago it was "relativity" with which we wrestled. Now we cannot do without "tensions" and "dialectic" and "existential" and "ontological," and the sophistications of current philosophy. Kierkegard gets quoted as often as Jeremiah, to whom he was more or less akin. All this is an exaggeration, of course, but read the semi-religious books which have lately come from the press and it will not seem so much of an exaggeration after all. One cannot calculate the vanished alternative of history but if the Church, with its vast and awesome authority across the centuries, had urged the "way" of Jesus upon generations of communicants as it has urged so many lesser things, we might be nearer the Kingdom of God.

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President Henry Churchill King once
id that one of our greatest dangers
to ignore the commonplace. (As, for
ample, that two and two make four,
ts have consequences and somebody has
work if anybody eats.) The unrealized
es not lose its power because we have
g known that we ought to realize it,
d because we know the Gospels so well
he more reason we should know them
er. Time "like an ever rolling stream"
y "bear all its sons away" but it does
t carry with it the authority of the
mon on the Mount or the timelessly
ewed significance of the Parables.

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Perhaps the secret, if there is any, of
aling with the commonplace is to rein-
pret its meanings and bearing and put
nto some vaster setting, as though one
uld tell a child that a clock really takes
time from the stars. The Parables can
ways, so to speak, be refocused. There
s never a time when it was really more
cial to know who our neighbors are
n just now. Every controlling principle
the most up-to-date relief work is in
story of the Good Samaritan. The
hnique is unchanged. There is always
great gulf between possession which
ther cares nor shares and the tragic
llowship of beaten men—*there* is a gulf
ich imperils souls and societies if it
not bridged or better filled up.
The "far-country" is never as far as
think. Its boundary lines run through
imaginations, our wills and our spirits.
arning, waiting love is as old and as
w as heartache. Redemptive forgive-
ss may still be forgotten at our proud
il and so on and on. We have long
n taught that the Parables were meant
illustrate but one point and that all the
t was, to use an irreverent phrase rever-
ly "window dressing," but that is really
so. Jesus was more than an artist in his
rations. He set the point he was trying
make in a context which is always part
of life itself and the Parables, therefore, offer a field for preaching far, far beyond their central revelation. Incidentally, their very phrases supply sermon topics of almost inexhaustible suggestion. They need only to be quoted to illustrate, as for example, "I want mine"—the most fatal of demands. "How far is the far country?" "Coming to one's self" "I will—" Surely here are lines which preacher and congregation can follow through together with mutual profit. Almost any one of the Parables can so be treated in series.

These general considerations hold true of the Sermon on the Mount, for unless we can implement the Sermon on the Mount and make diplomacies and policies and international and industrial agreements out of it, there is neither healing nor safety anywhere. A thing-obsessed world needs to know that the abundance of life is not in an unsocialized abundance of things; that civilizations may be built on sand; that every days Judgment Day and every deed has timeless issues. The preacher can never be done and never should be done saying all that, for, though Christian folk may pretend to know it all, certainly our Christian civilization does not act as if it does—or else believe it.

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Preaching from the Sermon on the Mount and the Parables carries with it their authority and that statement needs no enlargement. If and as the people know the backgrounds of Jesus' teaching so much the more should they be at home in the foreground and ready to be led beyond them. Also preaching from the parables and the Sermon on the Mount does not need to do it all. It has already been prepared for and is saved too long introductions. The Sermon on the Mount is a sermon in itself. So are the Parables. They actually do the saying themselves. Perhaps this more than anything else makes their elaboration difficult. It is hard sometimes to preach from them, but it is far too easy to cloud their luminous simplicities. No matter; tune the sermon

to their music; inform the sermon with their meanings and forget the bulletin board in front of the church and next Sunday's newspaper announcements. We might be surprised how the people would come and keep coming.

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So much, of course, must be left to the "overtones." That perhaps is the test of the preacher's art in this or any other region. As we came to the end of our discussions, one of the wisest of us stressed this; the Beatitudes and the Sermon, he said, find their way to our minds and motivations by roads all their own and need only to be heard over and over to assert themselves. Suppose, he said, that they should begin every session of the United Nations with a reading from the Sermon on the Mount—"Blessed are the peacemakers"; "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you—"; "but I say to you forgive your enemies"—and the delegates should hear it—each in his own tongue? Would not their clamors be muted? their militant passions rebuked? their wills be made malleable to noble purposes and creative understanding? There is an old tale that a city was once built to music. A poet thought that if a man heard such music he would know that, "They are building still, seeing the city is built by music, therefore never built at all, therefore built forever." The music of the Gospels is like that.

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By the time this issue of the QUARTERLY reaches its readers the glory will have gone from our Northern forests and roadside, the trees will be bare-branched against November skies and stormy Orion ride up from the east in belted majesty. Incidentally the autumnal beauty of this peculiar region has been unmatched for years. Every bush has been "afire with God." The miracle of the bush which burned and was not consumed has been repeated by every roadside as though we should pass into winter attended by banners and through gates of fugitive glory.

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This issue of the QUARTERLY encloses the subscription slips for the next year. They are commended to the attention of our subscribers. May their tribe increase! The Commission which sponsors the QUARTERLY wants it really to serve all our ministers—so does the Editor naturally. Tell how we can do better. This issue of the QUARTERLY is being sent to all Congregational-Christian students in Theological Seminaries and Divinity Schools. It carries a sincere greeting to them and through them salutes the church of the future.

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Now to end with here is the proposed program of the aforesaid club—a classification for a preacher's purpose of the Parables: "Parables of Last Things"; "Parables of Human Accountability"; "Parables of Human Relationship"; "Parables of the Kingdom"; "Parables of Divine Justice"; "Parables of Prayer"; and a "Cabalistic Parable" (Dives and Lazarus). "And without a Parable spake he nothing unto them."